


# Soul Marks



Summer 2009

Issue 13 page 1

## SOUL MARKS OLD AND NEW

The last six months have seen Soul Marks revisiting regular haunts: Leith School of Art and Lochiehead for the Art and Prayer workshops, Motherwell North Parish Church for Art and Worship workshops and also continuing work alongside the priority areas and one day a week with St. James Episcopal Church, Leith.

There have been new places to visit too; a Lent Art and Prayer workshop took place in Peebles for the first time, there was an 'all age' Pentecost workshop in Stirling, and over 1000 women experienced the Quiet Space created by Soul Marks at the Women Walking With God Conference in Edinburgh last March.

Venturing further afield, in July Carol will be travelling to Vermont, USA where she has been invited to work with the congregation of Old South Church, UCC, Windsor. Their pastor, Mandy Lape Frieberg will make a return visit to Carol in Edinburgh, in August, to learn more about Soul Marks' work within Scotland.

The Trust continues to grow and on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June a group of 20 people involved in Soul Marks, in many different ways, will gather together to listen and reflect upon what has been happening and as to how we move forward over the next few years. We would value your prayers for this day and the ongoing process.

This is also the day on which Bernadette Campbell becomes the our new Chair of the trustees; Bernadette leads an Early Years education centre, 'Mr. Squirrel's Nursery', has attended various Soul Marks workshops and was part of the Jean Vanier Retreat planning team alongside Carol in 2007 - great to have you on board, Bernadette – welcome.

We would like to take this opportunity to offer big and special thanks to Peter Gardner who has been 'Acting Chair' for the last 8 months. Peter continues as a trustee and his support has been much appreciated during this transition.

*The pictures opposite are from the All Age Pentecost Workshop in Stirling*



## OUTGOINGS AND INCOMES!

A HUGE THANKS to Chris George for his dedication, patience and expertise as treasurer so wonderfully offered over the last 5 years ! Your work with us all has been so much appreciated.

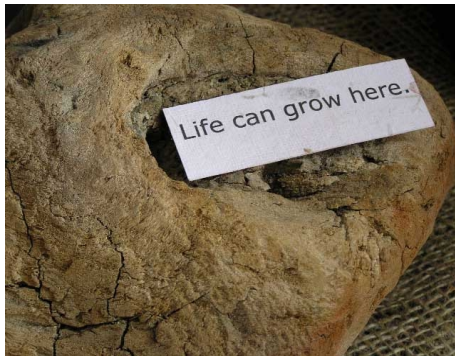
And welcome to Cathel Kerr as our next treasurer.

E mail: carol@soulmarks.co.uk  
Tel: 0131 467 6243  
Address: Soul Marks PO Box 23548 Edinburgh EH6 4WS  
Web: www.soulmarks.co.uk

Published by  
The Soul Marks Trust  
Charity No. SC034403

## SABBATICAL IMPRESSIONS

I had the pleasure of staying in Edinburgh for a weekend as part of my ministerial sabbatical. I took part in an Art & Prayer workshop run by Carol and also attended worship at St James', Leith, on the Sunday.



I had been particularly attracted to this workshop as I relish the opportunity for space to reflect but also love to be creative. Putting the two together seemed the perfect idea of a quiet day for me.

I was surprised, however, that at the end of the day it wasn't the things I had hoped for from the day that brought me blessings. I had high hopes of going home with some artistic masterpiece, or at least something special that I had created which would sustain me spiritually in the days to come. I soon found myself feeling frustrated at not being able to produce what I was hoping for.

At the end of the day what I found most helpful was simply the space to 'be'. It was stimulating being with other people, looking at the beautiful worship centre set up by Carol, and in the end simply enjoying 'messaging about' with the paints, without too much thought of the end result.

It was hard to let go of the desire to 'achieve' something but once I did it was refreshing and renewing just to be in a caring, nurturing and accepting space.



The lasting impression of the weekend for me, however, comes from St James'. I thought it was absolutely wonderful and

inspirational to worship in a room which changes throughout the year. It spoke louder than words to me (and I imagine to anyone who worships regularly at St James') that the Christian life is not something static.

In most places of worship things tend to stay the way they have always been, thus subtly giving the impression that the community is not on the move. At St James' I got the impression of a community constantly looking for something new that God will do among them – an inspiring experience.

*Camilla*

## ART & PRAYER

Art and Prayer workshops have become an important part of what I do to mark the beginning of Lent and Advent.

Setting aside a whole day to be quiet and explore the season in image, rather than word, gives me something I don't find at church and can't manage to create on my own.

I find it very powerful to be doing this in a group – the quiet concentration of people working away on their creations, the opportunity to share the results with others and the sense of being contained and looked after.

I always look forward to finding out what theme Carol is going to offer us, what images we'll be shown and what materials we are going to be given to work with – different each time, and always rich and relevant.

I come away from these days feeling nourished, surprised and grateful.

*Debbie Bayne*

## WHAT PEOPLE HAVE SAID

Many, many thanks for Saturday's workshop at Motherwell North. We enjoyed it so returned home inspired to introduce new elements to our Easter happenings within our Church. We've just had a planning meeting with our minister and have a sense of where we are going now. Thanks and good wishes from we four from East Kilbride.

*Kay*

I thought the Ash Wednesday service, St James', Leith, was fantastic, and you really have made the space BEAUTIFUL and so full of images, objects, labels, and colours and textures that inspire contemplation and prayer and thought. To be honest as I was praying at the 'altar' in the middle of the labyrinth, I was wishing I could stay there WAY longer. Still, resonances have stayed with me today.

*Claire*

13<sup>th</sup> March re 'Ecumenical Workshop for Creating Quiet Spaces for Holy Week', Eyemouth. Thank you



for a special afternoon – good to have time to talk and share some of our stories and time to be quiet with God. All comments afterwards were glowing with thanks for your inspiration.

*Rev. Jennifer Edie*



## JOURNEY THROUGH LENT

This year I journeyed through Lent with the community at St James the Less in Leith, where I now have the privilege of being Rector. My first weeks in the role immersed me in the creative moments of St James' Lent celebrations, which have been honed over the past few years under the eyes of Carol Marples and Steve Butler. Soul Marks' involvement in St James in the person of Carol - for a day a week over the past eighteen months - has given stability and dedicated resources to the ongoing development of creative liturgy at St James.

As well as the sheer sense of privilege, I feel as if I have been thrown in the liturgical deep end. This began on Ash Wednesday with a moving, and relatively wordless, service, in which those gathered journeyed in and out of a labyrinth marked on the church floor. Themes of vulnerability and mortality were evident as the differently-abled made their way to the center to receive the ashes, and to return via a candle-lit reflective space in the sanctuary.

Our theme for Lent was 'Bare Earth', suggesting the potential in our lives for God to grow new things. On the first Sunday in Lent we began with a wheelbarrow filled with earth as our focus, and planted beans in pots, whose growth would signify what God might be calling forth in us. The worship space was transformed from Epiphany's white walls to a bruising purple; pots with prayer-cards wrapped round were placed on the shelves; the sanctuary spoke of bare branches and waiting. A huge crown of thorns hung above the center of our space.



Palm Sunday saw the lowly king welcomed to Jerusalem on a carpet of leaves. On Maundy Thursday we re-enacted the Last Supper: preparing the table, eating together, remembering Jesus' body in bread and wine, clearing the table, and gathering in Gethsemane - all

within a single meditative movement. This last scene was enacted in the dark, in a semi-circle around a single lit candle: Jesus was now under arrest. Against the silence, from somewhere beyond the church walls, a heavy-metal band was practicing a cover version of AC/DC's 'Problem Child'. A perfect end. Afterwards, a few stayed on in silence to paint out the walls in white.

Good Friday took us, as in previous years, across Leith Links with members of the L'Arche community, ending in St James with silence, sandwiches and soup - an extraordinary witness to the mysterious power of weakness. On Holy Saturday the worship space experienced resurrection: through a team of joyful volunteers, walls shone yellow, flower pots sprouted, the crown of thorns blossomed, and brightly-coloured paper flowers garlanded the air above our heads.



On Easter day, this glory was revealed as a screen was rolled back, allowing a singing multitude to enter and take their seats. Afterwards, in the garden, glittering eggs were found by eager children. Through the transformation of space - through colour, symbol, action and song - the ancient words rang true: "He is risen indeed. Alleluia!"

*Duncan MacLaren*



## WOMEN WALKING WITH GOD



### WWWG

In March 09 Soul Marks was involved with the Women Walking With God conference at the Edinburgh Conference Centre. Carol Marples was invited to help create a quiet space which was used by a large number of women over the weekend.

The opportunity it gave to have some stillness and quiet was a moving and powerful experience for many of those attending the conference.

For some it provided a place to use creatively in expressing themselves with art materials, for others it allowed some space, or else somewhere to just sit and be with some other Christians in quietness.

What it gave is perhaps best expressed by some of the women using the space:

This prayer space has been a balm to the soul,  
a glimpse of heaven.....

I have no words except  
thank you for this glorious space.

*Esther*

### Soul Marks Newsletter by email

You can now receive your newsletter electronically in colour as a PDF file.

This helps the environment (no paper)  
and our finances.

To receive it in this format please send your name and email address to

admin@soulmarks.co.uk, using the subject title 'Newsletter'.

We are still happy to continue sending newsletters by post for those who prefer them that way. Unfortunately we can only produce these in black and white.

### DIARY UPDATE 2009

- 16/05/09 Spring Art & Prayer Workshop - Leith School of Art
- 19/05/09 Art & Workshop evening St Mark's Drumchapel (PA)
- 23/05/09 Pentecost Art & Worship Workshop - Stirling Presbytery
- 24/05/09 Pentecost Transformation - St James
- 02/06/09 2010 Worship Planning Group
- 08/06/09 Worship Group Meeting - St James
- 12/06/09 Soul Marks 'Reflective' day away
- 13/06/09 Art & Worship Workshop St Mark's Drumchapel (PA)
- 14/06/09 Sunday Service St Mark's Drumchapel (PA)
- 05-12/07/09 Residency in Vermont, USA
- 07-11/08/09 Consultancy Visit of Mandy Lape-Friberg - Vermont USA
- 11/09/09 Space & Worship Workshop - Perth
- 22/11/09 Advent Transformation - St James
- 29/11/09 First Sunday of Advent Service St James
- 29/11/09 Memorial Service Sick Children's Hospital Edinburgh
- 05/12/09 Advent Art & Prayer Workshop Day
- 07/12/09 Advent Art & Prayer Workshop Day Lochiehead
- 13/12/09 Advent Art & Prayer Workshop Day St James Leith

*PA =Priority Areas*

For an constant update on the diary  
please refer to the web site diary page on  
[www.soulmarks.co.uk](http://www.soulmarks.co.uk)